

Relevant Section of Wis. Administrative Code Chapter PSC 160

PSC 160.125 Funding to promote access to telecommunications services.

(2) Access programs or projects by non-profit groups. (a) Partial funding may be available to non-profit groups for the facilitation of affordable access to telecommunications and information services through programs or projects, or both, not supported elsewhere in this chapter, but that are consistent with the purposes identified in s. 196.218 (5) (a) 1. and 2., Stats.

Note: As of November 1999, s. 196.218 (5) (a) 1. and 2., Stats., reads:

(5) *USES OF THE FUND.* (a) *The commission shall require that moneys in the universal service fund be used only for any of the following purposes:*

1. *To assist customers located in areas of this state that have relatively high costs of telecommunications services, low-income customers and disabled customers in obtaining affordable access to a basic set of essential telecommunications services.*

2. *To assist in the deployment of advanced service capabilities of a modern telecommunications infrastructure throughout this state.*

(b) Any non-profit group may apply for universal service funding to fund any portion of a program or project or both. Funding shall be provided on a state fiscal year basis. Applications for funding in the following fiscal year shall be submitted by November 15th. The commission shall issue a list of approved programs or projects, or both, by April 15th, with funding for those programs or projects, or both, to begin that July 1st. All applications shall become public documents upon filing.

(c) Applications shall include:

1. A description of a public need which is not being met at present;

2. A description of how the program or project is consistent with the purposes identified in s. 196.218 (5) (a) 1. and 2., Stats.

3. A description of the program or project proposed, including a description of how the public need described in subd. 1. may be met through affordable access to telecommunications or information services;

4. A showing that the proposed program or project meets the described public need in a least cost manner. This requirement can be met by showing that the applicant carried out an appropriate request for proposals.

5. Identification of the providers of each portion of the telecommunications services or equipment and a specific description of the following components of the program or project:

a. The costs of telecommunications services and telecommunications equipment used by the program or project;

b. The cost of training for those who are served by the program or project so that they can utilize the services;

c. The administrative costs directly attributable to the program or project;

d. The cost of technical expertise required to complete the program or project; and

e. Revenue from services or training described in subd. 5.b.

(d) The commission shall evaluate all applications submitted. In evaluating the applications the commission shall consider information including, but not limited to, the following:

1. The basis of the public need to be met;

2. The extent to which other programs or projects, either funded under this section or otherwise under this chapter, meet that need; and

3. The overall cost of the proposed program or project.

(e) The universal service fund shall reimburse applicants for up to 50% of the cost of reimbursable portions of the program or project, or both. The reimbursable costs include those listed in par. (c) 5.a. to d.

(f) The programs or projects, or both, to be funded and the amount of reimbursement for each program or project shall be determined by the commission. The commission shall seek comments on the programs or projects to be funded, but shall not hold a hearing. A maximum of \$500,000 in funding may be dispersed under this subsection per state fiscal year.

History: Cr. Register, April, 1996, No. 484, eff. 5-1-96; **renum. from 160.063 (title), (1), (2), (3) and (4) to be 160.125 (1) (title), renum. (1) to (4) to be (1) (a), (b), (d) and (e), cr. (1) (c) and (2), Register, April, 2000, No. 532, eff. 5-1-00.**